

Michael Flynn, whom Trump had been advised before he fired him that he was subject to being compromised by the Russians in his operations.

Our Republican colleagues need to decide whether they want to be accessories to Trump's obstruction of justice as he continues to endanger our national security.

Trump's firing of Director Comey is a shocking example of incredible duplicity that threatens the very fabric of the future of American democracy. It is a Nixonian dismissal that is designed to obstruct further inquiry into collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia.

Trump even said himself during his NBC interview with Lester Holt that, "regardless of the recommendation from the Department of Justice," he was prepared and planning to fire the FBI Director because of what he was doing with the Russian investigation.

And that is part of a pattern: he fired the U.S. Attorney in New York City, he fired Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates, and he then fired Mr. Comey. If you are perceived as crossing the line with President Trump, it is like an episode out of that old TV series "The Apprentice." You are fired.

But this is not make-believe. This is the future of American democracy.

Every day we hear new cover-up evidence. What could possibly explain the continued Republican silence, the callous indifference?

Well, Trump is the Republican's golden ticket to denying healthcare coverage to 24 million Americans and, at the same time, already showering, with a bill passed in this House, almost \$1 trillion of tax breaks to the superrich and a handful of special interests.

He is their winning ticket to awarding multinational tax dodgers more tax breaks while blowing a hole in the deficit that can change Medicare and Social Security forever.

Trump reportedly told Comey: "I hope you can let this go."

My fellow Americans, FBI Director Comey could not let it go; and now that he is gone. We cannot let this go. This is not business as usual. This is not just more tax breaks for the superrich, as Republicans are urging at a hearing tomorrow in this House. We cannot let this go.

History will be unkind to those who could not find their voice at this critical time in American history. I say it is time to truly put America first. Reject Putin. Reject partisanship. Help restore confidence in our democracy by supporting an independent special counsel and the type of independent, nonpartisan, nonpolitical inquiry that I have been calling for since last November into this Russian interference.

Mr. Speaker, too much is at stake to remain silent. We must join together to address this challenge to our future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our Nation's teachers. Teachers change lives every day across our Nation and around the world, shaping our students and our communities.

Each of us can remember a teacher who made an impression on our life as an educator, a coach, or a mentor, often beyond the walls of the classroom.

Last week, in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week 2017, I had the opportunity to travel the Eighth District to see firsthand the amazing work that teachers do across Bucks and Montgomery Counties.

Throughout the week, I had the opportunity to read to preschool students at the Elbow Lane School in Warrington to discuss our national debt with eighth graders in Newtown Middle School, marked the Sanctuary Model accreditation of the Valley Day School in Morrisville, and held a student townhall with the AP government class students at Bensalem High School.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Teacher Appreciation Week, and I call on every American to carry out that appreciation for our teachers all year long.

□ 1030

#### MY CONSTITUENTS DESERVE ANSWERS

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this week marks the 1-year anniversary since the EPA established the health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion to limit the lifetime exposure to perfluorinated compounds like PFOA and PFOS.

To some, these acronyms and this anniversary may mean nothing, but to me and my constituents—more than 70,000 Pennsylvanians in Bucks and Montgomery Counties—it has been a year of confusion, concern, and anger sparked by the rightful fear that their health has been endangered by these PFCs.

The use of firefighting foam at military bases in and around our district has contaminated dozens of public wells and over 140 private wells with these compounds, leaving many residents scared and municipalities and local governments looking for answers.

Mr. Speaker, every American deserves access to clean, safe drinking water. Yet, for too many of my constituents, these elevated levels of PFCs have put them and their families at risk.

While work has been done, there is still far more work to do; and I am pleased that the recent government funding measure included directions for the Secretary of Defense to continue addressing these pressing issues, specifically by requiring all military services to establish procedures for prompt and cost-effective remediation

of PFC contamination, and also by delivering a report to Congress by the end of the summer assessing the number of military installations across the country impacted and the effect on drinking water in the surrounding communities, as well as department-wide plans for community notification of contamination and procedures for timely remediation.

However, our work cannot stop here. Not only should a health study be executed to know if PFOS and PFOA have compromised my constituents' long-term health, other issues must be addressed, including interacting with the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding service-connected condition care for military veterans potentially impacted and finding ways to offset trickle-down costs for those forced to connect to public water in impacted areas.

After a year, my constituents deserve more answers, and we will give them to them. They demand action. I will fight for both.

#### QUESTIONS FOR PRESIDENT TRUMP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, let me raise several questions for President Donald Trump. The American people and Members of Congress would like to know the answers.

I am deeply concerned the President is compromising the national security of our Nation. Why would a President share intelligence information with the highest ranking operatives of Russia close to President Vladimir Putin?

Though the President's cavalier and, frankly, outrageous behavior conveniently sucked up the airwaves last week, Americans cannot be distracted from his simultaneous firing of FBI Director James Comey, an official who spent his life protecting and defending the Constitution of our country on liberty's behalf.

Let me ask: Why were no U.S. journalists allowed into the President's historic meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov and Russia's Ambassador to the United States for many years, Ambassador Kislyak, one of probably the highest ranking intelligence officers as well as Ambassador from Russia to the United States? To my knowledge, no U.S. President has ever received officials from Russia in the Oval Office and then brought only Russian journalists with digital recording equipment into that office. Let me repeat that. We don't know who they were, but they brought equipment, digital recording equipment.

Think about that. Think about that.

Meanwhile, the President excluded American press. Not a single journalist from this country was allowed in. He replaced them with Russian state media operatives. Today, CNN reports that, how conveniently, President Vladimir Putin has now said he will